



## Proverbs – Part #1

The Book of Proverbs is a collection of practical life wisdom given mostly in short, memorable statements. Proverbs teach wisdom through short points and principles but should not be regarded as “laws” or even universal promises.

Proverbs is part of the body of Wisdom Literature that includes Job, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. While Proverbs presents the norms of life, things that are generally true that one should build their character around, the other wisdom literature books focus on the exceptions, as the book of Job appropriately demonstrates. So, all the Wisdom Books need to be taken together to balance one another. Proverbs without Job can lead to incorrect practical theology, as Job’s three friends illustrate.

The Book of Proverbs is unique...

- in its structure, being mostly a collection of individual statements without much context or organization by topic
- in its theology, being concerned with practical life wisdom more than ideas about God and His work of salvation
- in its connection with the secular literature of its time. Neighboring kingdoms had their own collections of wisdom literature, and in some places, there are significant similarities to these writings.

Proverbs deals with the most basic aspect of life: family, neighbors, work, speech, society, and so on... One of the ways that Proverbs teaches wisdom is through its portrayal of four basic character types: 1) the simpleton or naïve, 2) the fool, 3) the scoffer or mocker, and 4) the wise.

At its core, Proverbs provides guidelines for right and wise character development and therefore not surprising that it is one of the most quoted books in the Bible. So, let us be *wise* and remember that all wisdom depends on knowledge of God and to His submission (1:7).